

JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

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AVACO BUILDING NEARS COMPLETION

The Christian Audio Visual Center located on the campus of Aoyama College is rapidly nearing completion. This two-story building, costing around \$60,000, will provide facilities for workshops, production of radio, films, film strips and all sorts of audio-visual aids, in addition to room space for the use of Aoyama's Speech and Radio Department and other activities.

The present plan is to move from the offices in the Christian Center on the Ginza on December 28. The new center is to be open from the fourth of January. Dedication services will be held for the building on the ninth, Sunday afternoon at two, Mathew Ogawa, Secretary of AVACO, announced recently.

Mr. Ogawa went on to say that a film and film strip library will be maintained at the Christian Center for an indefinite time to come, since people are used to going there to order films. Mr. Ogawa also pointed out that, several important pieces of equipment are not provided for in the budget, including a piano and organ. The piano is an immediate need, and the organ almost as essential. Missionaries have been urged to help and a movement is on foot in Japan to raise some money for these things.

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CHRISTMAS RADIO AND TV PLANNED

The Audio-Visual Aids Commission (AVACO) is planning this year the most extensive program of penetration by radio and TV ever tried in Japan. Christmas is celebrated throughout Japan on a largely materialistic basis, as an opportunity for a gigantic yearend sale, complete with Santa Claus, Christmas trees and all the trimmings. However, there is no real understanding of the Christian roots and meaning of Christmas outside the Christian churches. AVACO is seeking through various programs to get across to the vast listening audience in Japan (over 80%) some understanding of what Christmas means to Christians throughout the world.

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Among the programs planned are the following:

- (1) A half-hour "pageant" presentation of the Christmas story on N-TV, a private station, directed by Mr. Ueda, a prominent Christian artist who has a regular children's story hour on TV.
- (2) A ten minute Christmas greeting by Dr. E.C. Blake, the newly-elected president of the National Council of Churches of Christ in America, to be broadcast over NHK, the government network which covers the entire country.
- (3) An hour long dramatic presentation on the meaning of Christmas for shortwave broadcast.
- (4) Two half hour programs of Christmas carols on shortwave by the YMCA chorus.
- (5) Three weeks of Christmas hymns and carols on the regular short-wave broadcast, "Stories of Hymns". This is a fifteen minute program, broadcast Monday through Saturday, which introduces a new hymn each day with explanation about the author, composer, and meaning.
- (6) A "pageant" or nativity drama (30 min.) on shortwave.

Use of the Bible Society's nativity film and a TV interview of Dr. Blake on NHK-TV, the government network, are still being negotiated.

None of these are paid broadcasts. All of this time is given free and the only expenses involved are production costs. These are held to a minimum by using choirs and performers willing to donate their time. Often these people are nationally known writers or performers, like Mr. Ueda, who give their talent as a Christian witness.

REV. BURTON W. MARTIN VISITS JAPAN

From January third to tenth, Rev. Burton W. Martin, General Secretary of the Radio, Audio-Visual Education, Mass Communications Commission of the NCCC-USA, will be in Japan. Rev. Martin is also head of the department on radio and audio-visuals of the Presbyterian Church USA.

Rev. Martin will be making a tour of Asian nations, which have programs related to RAVEMCCO, on his way to the Asia Conference on Audio Visuals and Mass Communications to be held in Bangkok, March 2-9 of next year.

While in Japan Rev. Martin will be advising with the leaders of AVACO on their program in Japan and will also take part in the Dedication Ceremony of the Christian Audio Visual Center on January 9.

EVANGELISM OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST FEDERATION

Strategy Commission

The Evangelistic Strategy Commission set up last July (see JCAN of Oct. 1 p. 2) has swung into action. The Chairman is Rev. Kenji Ootani who is also the chairman of the Southern Baptist Federation Department of Evangelism and pastor of the Ooi Baptist church in Tokyo. The membership of the committee is composed of four missionaries and four pastors. The Commissioner is attempting to go beyond the formulation of principles or statement of ideals and is trying to apply Christian theology to the specific problems of actual conditions in Japan. An indication of this can be gained from a listing of the areas of discussion so far:

1. Transition from church school to church membership. A large proportion of church school members never become interested in the church and drop away during their high school years. How and why are these lost?
2. The management of the business and the organization of the churches.
3. Training of laymen; Christian nurture after baptism.
4. The relation of the churches to Japanese society.
5. The relation of churches to their neighboring communities.
6. Individual evangelism, as a method and as a follow-up.
7. Problems of the family life of ministers in both their standard of living, and in their ability to witness through their personal examples.

The conclusions of this Commission will be issued about the end of this coming February.

Teamwork in Evangelism

An experimental project in evangelistic teamwork was carried out last July in Asahikawa, Hokkaido. For one week a team of musicians, businessmen, missionaries, educators, and preachers carried on an intensive campaign. As a result, 165 people signed cards of decision. Since then, missionaries from Sapporo, which is two hours away, have been working with this group and preparing the way for the building of a church and the calling of a pastor. Now, six months later, there are forty people who have continued their interest and are preparing for baptism.

Encouraged by the results of this evangelistic teamwork, the Southern Baptist Federation is planning to get together three more such teams for similar projects all over Japan.

Other Methods

Although the Southern Baptists among the coal miners of northern Japan have been meeting regularly as to means of extending their work, no definite steps have been made to work more effectively.

